



August - September 2005

#### INSIDE TODAY



**Fired-Up 5K and Family/  
Youth Walk on Sept. 5**

Page 6

**Imperial Sugar Update**

Page 5

**Welcome Police  
Chief Griffith**

Page 6

**U.S. Customs  
Now at Airport**

Page 8

**Opportunities for  
Active Citizens**

Page 9

**Tax Rate and Budget  
Process in Motion**

Page 10

**Surface Water Planning**

Page 13

**Parks and Recreation  
Happenings**

Page 14

**Mark Your Calendar**

Page 16

## Annexation Policy Stresses Fiscal Responsibility



Sugar Land's progressive annexation policy will ensure that high standards of development are maintained and that annexations are fiscally sound, with no increase in cost of services to current residents.

The City of Sugar Land has begun discussions with communities in its extraterritorial jurisdiction to set the timetable for their anticipated annexation into the City's corporate limits. Strategic partnership agreements entered into with ETJ communities will protect current residents. By City Council policy, annexations will not increase the cost of services to current resi-

dents and will be voluntary.

Sugar Land and Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 113, which includes Avalon and Brazos Landing, have reached an agreement to annex these communities into Sugar Land by the end of the year.

Sugar Land's ETJ is the annexation-eligible area as established and defined by state law. Other eligible

communities are Greatwood, New Territory, Riverpark and those in the Plantation MUD (sections of Tara Colony and Tara Plantation). Sugar Land is currently working with the boards of these MUDs to develop strategic partnership agreements for any new, extended or improved municipal services and expects to have these agreements by January 2006.



# DEAR RESIDENTS



**Allen Bogard**  
City Manager

Throughout Sugar Land, residents can see our City continue to prosper with ongoing construction of new homes, new businesses and retail areas and on our major roadways. As this activity progresses, please know that Sugar Land remains committed to prudent growth management efforts that will ensure we maintain our quality of life.

Sugar Land's Comprehensive Plan guides the physical growth of our community and sets the stage for development decisions to achieve the vision to be "The Community of Choice." The Goals, Objectives and Strategies were rewritten and adopted in 2003, and a revised Land Use Plan was approved in 2004. Several other important components of the Comprehensive Plan are being updated or implemented:

- The proposed Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan calls for the continued commitment to existing parks and facilities and the expansion of recreational opportunities along the Brazos River corridor. These include a recreation center, trails of all types, open space and natural areas and a special events/festival site with an amphitheater. The plan was approved in July.
- The Facility Master Plan identifies the City's future building and facility needs. The plan is a tool that determines funding, construction timing and probable locations for new facilities or the expansion of existing ones required for the City to keep pace with increasing service demands. This plan was approved in July.
- An update to the Master Drainage Plan is currently underway that not only will identify drainage areas (watersheds) and proposed projects for the City but will establish interagency responsibility for the drainage entities working together within the City (e.g., Levee Improvement Districts and the County Drainage District), ensuring the best use of agency dollars. The plan will also be used to help establish policy, identify future needs and serve as the basis for formulating drainage projects to include in Sugar Land's capital improvements program. The public input process for the plan update is anticipated this fall prior to adoption by City Council.
- Water availability is another critical topic for continued growth. Our Wastewater Master Plan was completed in 2004, and an update to our Water Master Plan will begin August 2005. By 2013, Sugar Land must change from reliance on groundwater to a 30 percent reliance on surface water. We also will be considering reuse opportunities. See page 13 for our proposed plans to accomplish this.
- Annexation planning continues through the negotiations of strategic partnership agreements with the municipal utility districts serving the developed communities in our extra-territorial jurisdiction. The City looks toward annexing Municipal Utility District 113 (Avalon and Brazos Landing) by the end of 2005 (see page 1). Our annexation policy pledges that current residents will not feel a negative impact from annexation as we welcome new residents to the City. The policy also states that ETJ residents will pay in full for all City services received.

I encourage you to stay informed about these important topics that will shape our City. I appreciate your patience with our construction activity and hope to see you at our District Town Hall meetings in August and September (see page 9).

Sincerely,

## SUGAR LAND GOALS 2004-2009

**Well-planned community**  
**Safest city in the area**  
**Strong local economy**  
**Responsible city government**  
**Mobility for people**  
**Livable neighborhoods**

## CITY COUNCIL

**David G. Wallace**  
Mayor

**Thomas Abraham**  
At-Large Position One

**Daniel O. Wong**  
At-Large Position Two

**Dennis C. Parmer**  
Single Member District One

**Cyril Hosley**  
Single Member District Two  
Mayor Pro Tem

**Russell C. Jones**  
Single Member District Three

**Michael S. Schiff**  
Single Member District Four

## CITY MANAGEMENT

**Allen Bogard**  
City Manager

**David Ellison**  
Assistant City Manager

**Paul A. Hofmann**  
Assistant City Manager

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## Annexation (continued from page 1)

It has long been assumed that the ETJ communities would some day be included in the City's corporate limits and receive the full benefit of City services. Sugar Land has traditionally provided municipal services — primarily fire protection — on a contract basis to MUDs. The new annexation policy adopted last year by Sugar Land City Council links future service agreements with MUDs to an annexation commitment,

a critical tool that will enable the City to define long-range service obligations and financial plans.

The City will extend services, such as fire protection and water/wastewater, outside its corporate limits only if annexation agreements are signed and the services are paid for completely.

"Our new policy will help ensure that City services are provided and funded in an equitable manner," said City

Manager Allen Bogard. "We feel that it is important to know which districts will opt to receive services from the City as we finalize our plans for meeting state mandatory groundwater reduction requirements.

"This information will help us make decisions related to surface water sources, sizing treatment plants, etc. The districts also need to make decisions and plans for meeting those same requirements, so

going through this process in a timely manner should be in everyone's best interest."

Currently all of Sugar Land's water comes from groundwater sources. The City must meet state-mandated deadlines for surface water conversion. See related article on page 13.

The City continues to provide MUD boards with the information needed to make decisions related to services and annexations.



## Annexation Glossary

**Extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ):** an unincorporated area contiguous to Sugar Land's corporate boundary and eligible for annexation.

**Municipal utility district (MUD):** a political subdivision of the State of Texas authorized by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to provide water, sewage, drainage and other services within the MUD boundaries.

**Strategic partnership agreement (SPA):** a written mutual agreement between the City of Sugar Land and a municipal utility district outlining City services and an annexation plan of the MUD.

**Groundwater Reduction Plan (GRP):** the City's plan to meet the Fort Bend Subsidence District's mandated surface water conversion deadlines in 2013 and 2025.

**Levee Improvement district (LID):** a political subdivision of the State of Texas authorized by the TCEQ to construct and maintain levees and other improvements along rivers, creeks and streams; to reclaim lands from overflow from these streams; and to provide proper drainage and other improvements of the reclaimed land.



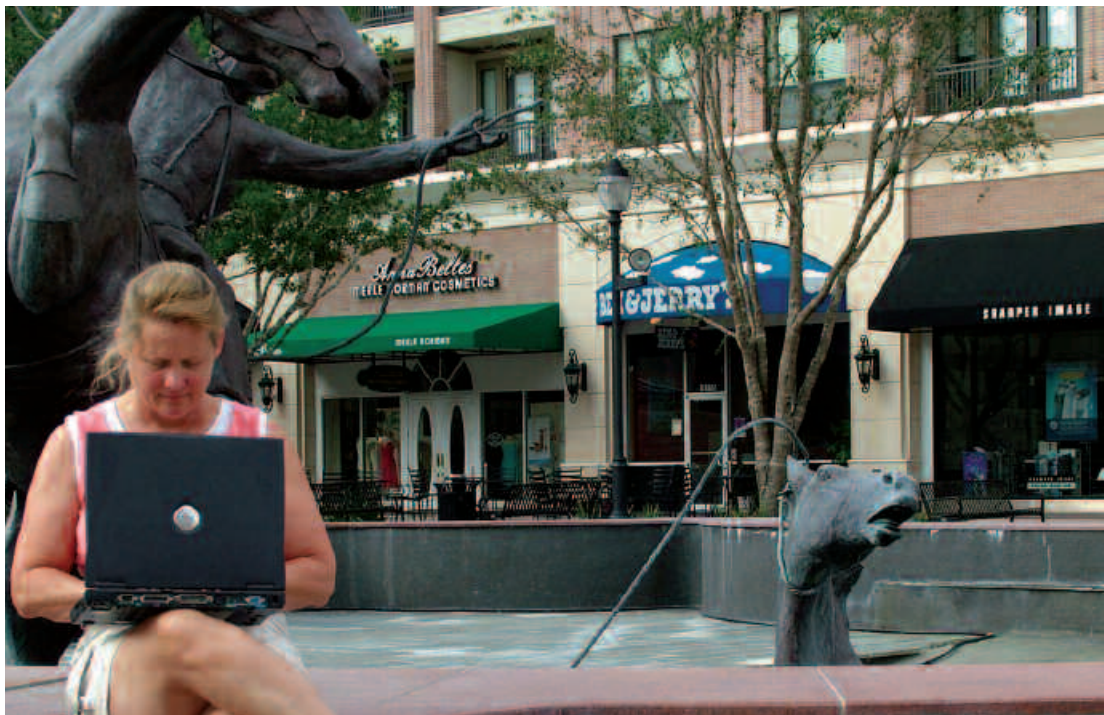


# Sugar Land Gives High Five to Wi-Fi

Residents and visitors can access the Internet for free while enjoying the Sugar Land Town Square plaza.

A cooperative effort between the City of Sugar Land, Alltel and Sugar Land Town Square has resulted in the installation of Wi-Fi, short for wireless fidelity, at the plaza. The free service is limited to the area directly in front of City Hall.

Sugar Land utilizes Wi-Fi for various municipal purposes, such as traffic management and operations at the Sugar Land Regional Airport. Town Square Wi-Fi will serve as a pilot project for providing wireless Internet to the public for recreational purposes.



Surf's up in Town Square plaza.

## Solicitation Ordinance Strengthened

Sugar Land residents may find fewer unwanted interruptions at their doors, thanks to City Council's recent amendments to the solicitation ordinance. The new measures are intended to enhance public safety and neighborhood quality of life in the most effective manner available. The additions to the solicitation ordinance are a response to an important concern identified by residents.

The amended ordinance now provides standards for

approval, requires background checks of applicants and allows Municipal Court to impose substantial penalties for violations. Licenses now can be denied if the solicitor has been convicted of certain offenses within the last five years. Five of the first 23 license applications received under the new restrictions were denied due to criminal convictions or civil judgments.

Previously, City regulations only provided for registration of solicitors in residential

areas and did not provide a basis for denying a solicitor's application.

Residents can place their address on the City's "No Solicitation Registry." A copy of the registry is issued with each solicitation license. It is a violation to solicit an address on the registry; violators are subject to fines and license revocation.

Not all door-to-door contacts with residents are regulated by the code. Licenses are not required for persons under 14 years of age or for

canvassing, which is (a) attempting to enlist support for or against a particular religion, political party, candidate, cause or issue or (b) distributing flyers advertising a noncommercial event or service.

For more information about the amended solicitation ordinance or to place your home address on the No Solicitation Registry, call 281-275-2277 or e-mail [hshaw@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:hshaw@sugarlandtx.gov).

# Sugar Land Prepares for Imperial Sugar Redevelopment

Imperial Sugar Company announced in February that it had reached an agreement with Cherokee Investments and W.C. Perry Land Development for the sale of its property. Since then, City officials have been working diligently to prepare for a successful redevelopment process.

"The City recognizes Imperial Sugar's rich history as well as the impact of the redevelopment to adjacent development and to the City as a whole. It is our goal to guide the redevelopment of the Imperial Sugar refinery site to accomplish historic preservation, continued aesthetic and architectural quality and community and economic development objectives to create a successful and vibrant project for the community," states City Manager Allen Bogard.

City Council has taken several actions:

- City Council approved a resolution to outline the City's expectations for the redevelopment of the 160-acre Imperial Sugar property and the development of the adjacent 500 acres currently owned by the Permanent School Fund known as Tract 3. (Tract 3 is bounded to the west by State Highway 6, to the north by Voss Road, to the east by Burney Road, to the southeast by Oyster



*For updates on the Imperial Sugar Company property redevelopment, access the Imperial Sugar link on [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov).*

Creek and to the south by U.S. 90A.)

- City Council approved a resolution establishing a City Council task force to assist the City Manager in the redevelopment process for the property and/or the development of Tract 3. Council task force members are Dennis Parmer, Michael Schiff and Russell Jones.
- City Council approved a resolution agreeing not to oppose legislation filed with the 79th Texas Legislature to create a special management district as proposed by the prospective developers of the Imperial Sugar property as long as the legislation filed was in full compliance with a letter agree-

ment outlining certain development issues.

Although the legislation creating the special management district was approved, the City must also consent to its creation before the district can be established.

- City Council approved an agreement with Cherokee for the potential acquisition of Tract 3. The City received legal counsel that the acquisition is possible, with the City serving as the means for this to occur. It has also been determined that the acquisition by the City can occur with no cost or risk to the City. All funding would be provided by Cherokee, and a due diligence period would

be established to allow for the approval of a General Land Plan, Development Agreement, Utility Agreement and Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone by the City prior to closing on the property.

The City of Sugar Land has informed the developer that community input is essential for the success of the project. The "Imperial Sugar Redevelopment Progress" link on [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) offers residents the opportunity to learn about the project and to send comments to the City. Click on the link to view information on Council action, press releases and other materials and to submit comments.





# Steve Griffith Named Sugar Land Police Chief

Please welcome Steve Griffith, who joined the City of Sugar Land as police chief on Aug. 8. Former Police Chief Lisa Womack resigned in July for family and personal reasons and will become the police chief in Elgin, Ill. During the City's search for a police chief in early 2004, Griffith and Womack were the two finalists out of over 80 applicants. Both were determined to be fully qualified for the position. This recruitment and selection process entailed developing an ideal chief profile, a nationwide search and an extensive selection process.

"All of the information from last year's selection process is still valid, and I have elected to appoint Steve Griffith as our chief of police. I am convinced no better individual can be found to meet the City's needs," said City Manager Allen Bogard. "Our new police chief is an

effective and respected leader with an understanding of communities with diverse cultures."

Griffith is a Houston-area native with 27 years of law enforcement experience. For the past two years, he has been executive director of the ALERRT (Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training) Center at Texas State University in San Marcos.

He previously was police chief in the cities of San Marcos (1998 to 2003) and West University Place (1987 to 1998) where he developed community-policing models. In San Marcos, this included implementing special patrol units for the downtown district and the outlet mall complex, the second most visited tourist location in Texas. His experience in these areas will strongly benefit Sugar Land as plans begin for a specialized enforcement district for the Town Center area

(see story on page 7).

During Griffith's tenure in San Marcos, the crime rate decreased 32 percent. City officials credited Griffith with increasing training for officers, as well as implementing several technology upgrades in the areas of dispatch, access to data in the field and communications.

"More than 20 years of my law enforcement experience was in the Houston area, and my family and I lived part of that time in Sugar Land. We look forward to seeing old friends and getting reacquainted with the community. As police chief, I have routinely worked with residents and businesses to develop programs that targeted identified needs. Community collaboration is a powerful tool for strong crime prevention and crime resolution programs. The Sugar Land Police Department has made giant strides with these initiatives, and I am committed to



Steve Griffith  
Sugar Land Police Chief

maintaining this forward momentum," Griffith said.

Griffith earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Houston and a master's degree in criminal justice management from Sam Houston State University. His career began with the University of Houston as a patrol officer. From there, he spent eight years in various positions with the Bellaire Police Department before becoming West University's police chief.

He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the public executive institute at the University of Texas Lyndon Baines Johnson School of Public Affairs.

## Fire up for the Fired-Up 5K

The City of Sugar Land and First Colony Community Association are co-sponsoring the third annual Fired-Up 5K and Family/Youth Walk on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 5.

The event begins at 7 a.m. at the corner of Common-

wealth Boulevard and Elkins Drive, continues through First Colony and concludes at Sugar Land Fire Station 5, where door prizes will be announced and awards will be presented to race winners.

All proceeds from the race will directly benefit

the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a health agency aimed at conquering neuromuscular diseases that affect millions of Americans.

"Please join Sugar Land firefighters and me in this benefit for MDA. The race is an excellent way for residents

to appreciate their good health and fitness while benefiting others," said Sugar Land Fire Chief Dannie Smith.

Call FCCA at 281-634-9555 for more information.

## Grant Funds Nine Additional Officers

Police officer visibility and service throughout the community will increase by January 2006 through a \$675,000 U.S. Department of Justice Universal Hiring Grant awarded the Sugar Land Police Department to enhance Homeland Security efforts.

Nine police officers will be hired to supplement staffing and officer deployment in all four City police beats. The increased staffing will help address a projected 5 percent increase in service calls next year due to normal population growth. SLPD will use this funding as an opportunity to increase workforce diversity to more accurately reflect the community.

Five officers will be assigned to a newly created Specialized Enforcement District encompassing the Town Center area. This was created based on analysis of police service needs in the expanding commercial area.

Beginning in August, the police department will assign two evening shift officers to the SED. These new assignments ensure that existing patrol officers can remain in their respective beats to efficiently respond to residents' needs.

The SED includes business

areas bordered by U.S. Highway 59, State Highway 6 and Lexington and Sweetwater Boulevards; the roadways themselves are not located in the SED. Major SED constituents include Town Square, First Colony Mall, Town Center, AMC Movie Theatres and

Methodist Hospital.

All nine officers will go through the City's six-week field-training program designed to teach recruits the specific philosophy and operational practices of the Sugar Land Police Department.



Gathering before roll call are (front, l-r) officers Damian Foley, Phillip Karasek, Monica Rhodes and Luke Jones with Detective Charles Seely seated in the rear. Professional development for current personnel continues as a top priority for the Sugar Land Police Department. And now, all newly hired officers receive six weeks of training geared toward SLPD's operational practices.

## Drivers in the Know: Police Procedures

Some police procedures may seem abrupt or discourteous to motorists. You may know you are safe and no threat, but for officer safety, as well as your own, police personnel have been trained to follow certain guidelines in traffic stops.

An officer usually parks his or her patrol car behind the motorist's vehicle. This allows approaching drivers to see the patrol car, providing the officer a safer area in the roadway to work.

When approaching a motorist's vehicle, the officer watches the driver's body movements and looks for weapons or other

life-threatening or illegal items contained inside the car.

The officer will stand next to the vehicle in a position allowing for the clearest view inside. The driver may need to look over his or her shoulder to see the officer.

As a safety precaution, an officer's hand may be on his or her weapon when approaching the motorist's vehicle.

Unless asked by the officer, occupants should not exit the vehicle. This practice protects them from being injured by moving traffic, as well as provides for the officer's safety.

## New Police Vehicles Hit the Streets

Sugar Land Police Officer John Fling displays one of the new police cars designed to create stronger visibility in the community with bold use of the word "Police" on the side and rear.

The new gold and blue car markings incorporate the SLPD patch, its accreditation emblem and the City logo.



All police cars ultimately will carry the new decals.

Through replacement or attrition, all City vehicles will

eventually display the new City logo, approved by City Council last fall, as well as other appropriate City

markings. Public Works vehicles and other newly marked City equipment are already on the street.



## COMMERCE

# U.S. Customs Arrives at Airport

U.S. Customs and Border Protection began operating a User Fee Airport program at Sugar Land Regional Airport in May. The unique program allows airports that do not qualify as a Port of Entry to perform international inspection services.

A full-time U.S. Customs and Border Protection agent is present at Sugar Land Regional Airport from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The agent is on call for later arrivals. Each time an aircraft clears customs, a fee is assessed for the agent and expenses.

Many of the airport's corporate tenants conduct business globally. This program enables them to fly directly to Sugar Land without landing at another airport for U.S. Customs, which is a significant cost savings.

As the airport is an important part of the City's overall economic development activities, the User Fee Airport program is expected to be an attractive addition for current and future corporate customers.

The addition of customs is a direct result of a need identified by the airport's corporate customers and was

supported by U.S. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay.

While Sugar Land Regional Airport continues to function as a self-sufficient economic asset, airport and City leaders are equally committed to being a good neighbor to surrounding residents, businesses and the overall community. The airport will continue to emphasize general and corporate aviation only as it enhances existing services and makes necessary physical improvements.

The next planned major improvement is completion of a new 20,000-square-foot terminal building in spring

2006. This new facility is expected to further strengthen the airport's position as one of the finest, most customer-friendly corporate and general aviation airports in the marketplace.

Sugar Land Regional Airport is a self-sustaining operation that uses no taxpayer dollars. The airport generates revenue from fuel sales, hangar rentals and land leases, contributing about \$350,000 per year to the City budget for its support services. Airport projects are funded by local, state and federal airport improvement funds.





## Attention Future Leaders

Sugar Land 101 is a unique 10-week course that will familiarize future community leaders with their City government. Classes will be held at City Hall from 6-9 p.m. and are tentatively scheduled to begin Thursday, Feb. 2, 2006. Participants are asked to attend all sessions.

This free class is open to City residents who have lived here for at least one year, are registered voters and are not currently holding nor running for any elected City, county, state or federal position.

Applications for the spring 2006 class of Sugar Land 101 are being accepted through Oct. 14, 2005. To apply, go to [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and click on "Sugar Land 101" under Hot Topics, or stop by City Hall, 2700 Town Center North. Participants will be notified by Dec. 1 of their acceptance to the program.

For more information, call 281-275-2710.

## Mark Your Calendar for District Town Hall Meetings

Meet your City Council representative and your neighbors at District Town Hall meetings in August and September. Need to find out which Council member district is yours? Visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and search on "District Town Hall."

Town Hall Meeting	Date	Time	Location
District One	Aug. 25	6:30 p.m.	Sugar Land Community Ctr.
District Two	Sept. 21	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
District Three	Sept. 15	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
District Four	Aug. 30	6:30 p.m.	City Hall



Fifth-graders from Commonwealth Elementary School serenaded City Hall with a recorder concert in May and afterward took a building tour. Are you interested in visiting the new City Hall? Individual and group tours are available every Friday between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Reservations are required. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 281-ASK-CITY (281-275-2489).

## Have questions? Ask City.

The Community Action Center is a resource for residents who do not know where or whom to call. Residents will receive timely responses to their inquiries, requests and complaints.

To contact the Community Action Center:



E-mail [askcity@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:askcity@sugarlandtx.gov)



Visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and click on "Ask City"



Call 281-ASK-CITY (281-275-2489)



Visit City Hall at 2700 Town Center Blvd. North during business hours (Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.)



# City Manager Recommends Tax Rate Cut for 2005-2006 Budget

City Manager Allen Bogard filed the 2005-2006 budget with City Council on July 26. He recommended a \$.00857 tax decrease to 31.711 cents. After a series of August workshops, the budget and tax rate will be adopted in September.

To offset increasing residential valuations, City Council policy requires the tax rate to be no greater than the effective tax rate plus 3 percent when financial and economic conditions allow. The effective tax rate is the rate needed to generate the same amount of City revenues from the previous year on the same properties. The effective rate plus 3 percent allows for inflation to fund increased costs of services.

Following this policy, the adopted tax rate since 1997 has been an average of 1.94 percent greater than the effective tax rate, limiting average residential tax bills to an increase of only 1.94 percent (see graph). While City Council has reduced

Tax Year	Effective Tax Rate	Adopted Tax Rate	Variance to Effective Tax Rate
1997	0.35771	0.3583	0.2
1998	0.3674	0.3583	-2.5
1999	0.339	0.3583	5.6
2000	0.34053	0.3483	2.3
2001	0.32799	0.3333	1.6
2002	0.31929	0.32886	3.0
2003	0.31885	0.3284	3.0
2004	0.32154	0.32568	1.3
2005	0.30788	0.31711 *	3.0
* Proposed			Average: 1.94

the tax rate and proactively kept the average residential tax bill increase to less than inflation, residents do see a small increase in their City tax bill. The City portion is only 13 percent of the tax bill for residents paying City, school and county taxes.

Based on certified tax roll received from the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District, if the City were to adopt a tax rate this year equal to the effective tax rate plus

3 percent, the average homeowner would see an increase in their tax bill of \$16.07, or \$1.33 a month — a 2.5 percent increase over last year.

The Texas Legislature recently passed legislation to heighten awareness and ensure opportunities to participate in the tax rate setting process. Based on the new laws, if Sugar Land proposes to generate \$1 more in property tax revenues than last year on the same properties, the City must go through an

extensive public hearing and notice process. Residents would begin to see these notices in August on a proposed "tax increase," and City Council would vote on a tax rate in September.

The City remains committed to sound fiscal practices and takes seriously its responsibility to maintain the financial viability of the City and minimize fiscal impact to its residents now and in the future.

## Water/Wastewater Rates Among State's Lowest

According to a recent survey conducted by the Texas Municipal League, Sugar Land's water and wastewater rates are below the average when compared to those of 670 cities providing water services and 649 providing wastewater services. Sugar Land's monthly residential

bill is well below the state average of \$60.51 for 10,000 gallons; Sugar Land's monthly bill is \$49.35 for the same amount.

In comparing 26 cities similar in population to Sugar Land (51,397 to 115,107), Sugar Land's residential average consumption is 9,600, compared to

the overall average of 9,120. Sugar Land rates ranked fifth lowest for 5,000 gallons and sixth lowest for 10,000 gallons consumed. Based on 10,000 gallons, Sugar Land residents pay \$8.99, or 15.4 percent less than the average bill among these cities.

Sugar Land also compares favorably for commercial use. For commercial accounts with 2-inch water meters, Sugar Land ranked 10th lowest for 50,000 gallons and eighth lowest for 200,000 gallons.



# Pay Utility Bills Electronically

Want to stop writing checks and buying stamps? Sugar Land has two electronic payment options for customers to pay their water/wastewater bills: pay online anytime or have the payment automatically deducted each month from your bank account.

To pay your bill online, visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and click on "Utility Billing" under Sugar Land Features for payment instructions. This easy process saves you time, gives you access to billing history and lets you decide when to send the payment.

The Automatic Payment Plan electronically deducts payments from bank

accounts. At no cost, funds are automatically drafted on the Friday before the due date each month. Customers still receive monthly water bills to monitor water usage.

Customers choosing to pay by mail may pick up a one-year supply of pre-addressed envelopes at City Hall, 2700 Town Center Boulevard North. Customers experiencing hardship may obtain a supply of envelopes by mail.

Call 281-275-2750 or e-mail [revenue@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:revenue@sugarlandtx.gov) with any questions about these options, to begin the process of electronic payments or for payment and billing inquiries.



Sugar Land's residential and commercial water and wastewater rates are among the lowest in the state. Residents have several utility bill payment options, including in person at City Hall, 2700 Town Center Boulevard North (pictured above). Payments can include a donation to help others in need pay their bills.

## Utility Assistance Program Helps Those in Need

Extend a helping hand to customers who need assistance paying their water/wastewater bills through Sugar Land's Utility Assistance Program. This program is funded solely through your generous donations.

To contribute, simply check the box on your monthly water/wastewater

bill labeled "\$1.00 utility assistance" and include the donation when paying your bill. To authorize a monthly contribution, check the box to bill your account in any amount you specify, or visit [www.sugarlandtx.gov](http://www.sugarlandtx.gov) and select "Utility Billing" under Sugar Land Features and then "Utility Assistance Program Contributions."

Families that risk losing their water and wastewater services because of financial hardship may contact Fort Bend County Social Services at 281-342-7300. This department determines eligibility for assistance and processes the case for payment. The guidelines used to determine eligibility include low income, unem-

ployment, disability, single parent households, special financial hardships and persons 65 years of age or older on fixed incomes with no alternative source of funds.

For more information on the City's utility assistance program, call 281-275-2791 or e-mail [revenue@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:revenue@sugarlandtx.gov).



# Utility Operations to Change

## Water and Wastewater Utility Operations

More efficient water and wastewater service to Sugar Land's growing population will be the result of contract changes negotiated with ECO Resources, Inc. for field operations in the City's southern half.

After Oct. 1, all residents with water repair concerns should call the Public Works Department at 281-275-2450 at any time of the day or night. After 5 p.m., callers will be directed to an answering service, which then will alert staff of any emergency.

Other changes will affect the entire City:

- ECO Resources will read water meters, complete fire hydrant inspections and carry out the meter replacement program.
- City staff will handle all calls for services, complete grease trap inspec-

tions, manage the back-flow prevention program and take all bacteriological samples.

## Wastewater Plant Operations

Sugar Land's wastewater treatment needs currently are served by two primary plants: the South Plant and the North Plant. These plants currently are operated by two separate contracted entities. In order to increase the efficiency of wastewater operations, Sugar Land combined the two contracts for inclusion in a competitive bid process. This resulted in the recently approved five-year contract for wastewater treatment operations with the Brazos River Authority. Combining the two facilities into one contract saved the City over \$300,000 a year.

No matter what your address, for water repair needs call 281-275-2450.



Effective Oct. 1, both of Sugar Land's wastewater treatment plants will be under a new service contract. Sugar Land 101 field trips include a tour of the South Plant.

# Only Rain in the Storm Drain

Sugar Land's storm drains were designed to capture rainwater runoff and transport it into local creeks and rivers to prevent flooding. The system channels the runoff into water bodies untreated.

Anything else that enters a storm drain — such as litter, debris and other contaminants — can have negative environmental effects.

Larger items can become lodged in the system and lead to flooding problems.

What can residents do to save our water resources? Help maintain the beauty of Sugar Land's waterways by keeping storm drains free of these items:

- Sediment can cloud the water, making it hard for fish to get oxygen and for plants to grow. It can also

destroy aquatic habitats.

- Nutrients, often in the form of fertilizer, can cause algae blooms that lead to loss of oxygen in the water that aquatic organisms need to live.
- Debris can choke, suffocate or disable aquatic animals and makes waterways unsightly and unsafe.
- Yard waste, including leaves, can clog storm

drains and cause flooding. It also acts as an additional nutrient source.

- Pet waste left on the ground contributes harmful bacteria, parasites and viruses to waterways.

For more information on stormwater issues, call 281-275-2450.

# Surface Water Is the Wave of the Future

The Fort Bend Subsidence District recently mandated that Sugar Land begin partially substituting surface water sources for the groundwater withdrawals that currently supply all of the water we produce. Sugar Land must create and file a Groundwater Reduction Plan by 2008 to indicate how it will meet the reduction deadlines of 30 percent conversion in 2013 and 60 percent conversion in 2025.

As part of the ongoing planning process, a recent

study compared the costs and benefits of various water supply and treatment options available to reduce groundwater withdrawals. The future construction of a City-owned surface water treatment plant was considered the benchmark option because its costs would be low and relatively certain.

To ensure the most cost-effective implementation of this solution, the City is considering how supplemental water supply options could further

reduce the plant's costs. The goal is to continue the tradition of providing residents with superior water quality at the lowest possible cost. The proposed surface water treatment plant promises to help meet that goal for many years to come. As with all City water and wastewater services, the costs for converting to surface water will be funded through user fees, not taxes.

The City is working with its extraterritorial jurisdiction communities on the

details of their potential participation in the City's Groundwater Reduction Plan. The surface water conversion process will be an integral part of Sugar Land's service delivery relationship with the ETJ and will be formalized in strategic partnership agreements with these communities. Working together will yield relatively lower costs for everyone involved, while at the same time helping to safeguard our future water supplies.

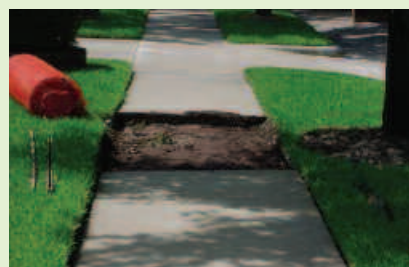
## Keeping You on Solid Footing



Each year, Sugar Land inspects, evaluates and prioritizes the condition of its 367 miles of sidewalk. The highest priority for repairs is given to sidewalks that have a trip hazard of two inches or more, excessive standing water, broken concrete or exposed reinforcement steel that may present a safety hazard to the public. Sidewalks leading to schools, shopping centers, churches, parks and libraries are also given a high priority rating because of the larger pedestrian traffic volume.

In 1998, Sugar Land budgeted \$1 million to bring all its sidewalks into a safe walking condition; since then, City Council has spent an average of \$150,000 per year to maintain these public walkways, resulting in about 8,000 linear feet of sidewalk removed and replaced each year.

Sugar Land's sidewalks are maintained by the Public Works Department, Street and Drainage Division, with a construction firm used for repair services. The division can mobilize a crew to address any emergency or isolated failures that arise outside the scope of the annual sidewalk repair contract.



Each year Sugar Land inspects its 367 miles of sidewalk and prioritizes the replacement of approximately 8,000 linear feet.

**To report a sidewalk in need of repair or for additional information, call Public Works at 281-275-2450.**



# Plantings Beautify Roadways

Thanks to a partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation, landscape and irrigation improvements are continuing along Sugar Land's major roads and highways when they are widened or improved. Plantings are selected to provide seasonal color and for their hardiness, low maintenance and low water needs.



Plantings like these at Williams Trace Boulevard and U.S. 59 add a splash of color along Sugar Land's major roads.

Landscaping has been added with TxDOT grant funds on U.S. Highway 59, Eldridge Road and the section of Dairy Ashford Road between U.S. Highway 90A and U.S. 59.

Recent improvements are visible along U.S. 59 feeder roads from U.S. 90A to Williams Trace Boulevard and at the northwest corner of U.S. 59 and Dairy Ashford Road. The right-of-way was improved with the help of grant funds contributed by Keep Sugar Land Beautiful. TxDOT awarded KSLB a \$130,000 grant through the Governor's Community Achievement Award program. This initiative recognizes Keep Texas Beautiful affiliates that have the state's

## U.S. 90A Expansion



New storm drainage piping is being installed along the future eastbound lanes of U.S. 90A. Drainage work is expected to continue for several months before the construction of new pavement begins. As construction takes place on Sugar Land's major highways — U.S. 90A, U.S. 59 and State Highway 6 — the City encourages drivers to watch for construction activity and to drive safely.

best volunteer environmental programs.

The plantings on Dairy Ashford Road include shade and flowering trees, flower-

ing perennials, antique roses and ornamental grasses; brick pavers have been placed at the median tips.

# RECREATION

**We're hitting the road and sailing the seas in September. Call 281-275-2885 to register for the trips listed below.**

## Astros Baseball

On Sept. 29, we'll sit at bullpen level to cheer on the home team. Cost is \$35 for residents and \$43.75 for nonresidents. Cost includes ticket and bus. Reservations begin Saturday, Aug. 13 at 9 a.m. We will depart at 5 p.m.

## Brenham

On Sept. 23, we'll depart at 9 a.m. to visit Blue Bell Creameries, Monastery of St. Claire's mini horse ranch and

the Brenham Heritage Museum. Lunch will be at Design II. Cost, which includes tour fees, lunch and bus, is \$50 for residents and \$62.50 for nonresidents.

## Sunset Sail

On Sept. 16, we'll depart at 4 p.m. to set sail on a replica of a 19th-century topsail schooner. Relax and experience a sunset cruise on Galveston Bay. Cost is \$50 for residents and \$62.50 for nonresidents. Dinner is not included.

# Inquiring Seniors Want to Know

What transportation opportunities are available in the area for senior citizens? Call the following resources for prices, hours of service and other useful information.

## Name & Phone Numbers

**Fort Bend Transit** 1-800-988-2902

**Sheltering Arms Escorted Transportation** 713-685-6577

**Elderly Home Health Care** 713-956-8183

**American Medical Response** (ambulance) 713-741-9540



# Leisure classes offer great fun for all ages



**Kick up your heels, learn fencing or karate, and much more.**



**Classes without specific dates are ongoing.**

**Call Parks and Recreation at 281-275-2885 for all the details.**

## Tai Chi

**When:** Monday & Wednesday, 9-10 a.m., Beginner  
Wednesday, 7-8 p.m., Beginner

**Where:** Sugar Land Community Center

**Ages:** 14-adult

**Fee:** Resident: \$7 per morning class, \$10 per evening class  
Nonresident: \$8.75 per morning class, \$12.50 per evening class

## Jazzercise

**When:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 8:15 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m., 5:40 p.m.  
Tuesday: 5:40 p.m.  
Thursday: 9:30 a.m., 5:40 p.m.  
Saturday: 8 a.m., 9 a.m.

**Where:** First Colony Community Center

**For more info:**  
281-437-7157 and  
[www.fortbendjazz.com](http://www.fortbendjazz.com)

## Fencing

**Who:** Bayou City Fencing Academy instructors

**When:** Monday & Wednesday, 7-8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Sugar Land Community Center

**Ages:** 10-adult

**Fee:** Resident: \$100 per month  
Nonresident: \$125 per month

## Karate

**When:** Tuesdays, Sept. 13-Dec. 6; 6-7 p.m., Beginners; 7-8 p.m., Advanced; 8-9 p.m., Adult

**Where:** Eldridge Park Community Center

**Ages:** Beginner (5-12), Advanced (5-12), Adult (13-70)

**Fee:** Resident: \$40 per 12-week session; \$30 per uniform (required)  
Nonresident: \$50 per 12-week session; \$30 per uniform (required)



## Line Dancing

**Who:** Marietta Stone

**When:** Tuesday, 3-5 p.m.

**Where:** Sugar Land Community Center

**Ages:** Adult

**Fee:** Resident: \$15 per month  
Nonresident: \$18.75 per month

## Line Dancing

**Who:** Laddie De Rouen

**When:** Wednesday, 1-3 p.m.

**Where:** Sugar Land Community Center

**Ages:** Adult

**Fee:** Resident: \$12 per month (Adv or Beg)  
Nonresident: \$15 per month (Adv or Beg)

## Line Dancing

**Who:** Eugenia Kang

**When:** Wednesday, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

**Where:** Sugar Land Community Center

**Ages:** Adult

**Fee:** Resident: \$15 per month  
Nonresident: \$18.75 per month

## Ballet Flamenco

**When:** Mondays:  
4:15-5:15 p.m., Beginner  
5:20-6:20 p.m., Intermediate  
6:30-7:30 p.m., Intermediate II  
Thursdays:  
5:20-6:40 p.m., Intermediate  
6:45-8:05 p.m., Intermediate II

**Where:** Lost Creek Community Center

**Ages:** Beginner (4 years & older), Intermediate (5 years & older), Intermediate II (10 years & older)

**Fee:** Resident: Beginner-\$35 per month (1 session per week); Intermediate & Intermediate II \$70 per month (2 sessions per week)  
Nonresident: Beginner-\$43.75 per month (1 session per week); Intermediate & Intermediate II \$87.50 per month (2 sessions per week)

## Yoga

### Fees for all Yoga classes:

Resident: \$40 twice a week per month, \$25 once a week per month  
Nonresident: \$50 twice a week per month, \$31.25 once a week per month

## Fitness Yoga

(more aerobic and at a faster pace)

**When:** Tuesday & Thursday, 6:15-7:15 p.m.

**Where:** City Park Community Center

**Ages:** 16-adult

## Hatha Yoga

(classical yoga techniques)

**When:** Tuesday & Thursday, 8:15-9:15 a.m.

**Where:** City Park Community Center

**Ages:** 16-adult

## Prenatal Yoga

(gentle course for the expectant mother)

**When:** Tuesday & Thursday, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

**Where:** City Park Community Center

**Ages:** 16-adult





# CALENDAR

	DATE	EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
S E P T E M B E R	5	Labor Day * City Offices Closed * Regular Solid Waste Collection		
	5	Fired-Up 5K	7 a.m.	Commonwealth Blvd. & Elkins Dr. intersection
	6, 20, 27	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	8	Citizen Police Academy Class 36 Begins	7 p.m.	Police and Municipal Court Facility
	13	Parks Board	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	13, 22	Planning & Zoning Commission	7 p.m.	City Hall
	15	District 3 Town Hall	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
	21	District 2 Town Hall	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
O C T O B E R	4, 18, 25	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	8	Crime Prevention Fair	9 a.m.-1 p.m.	To be announced
	9-16	Fire Prevention Week		
	11	Parks Board	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	11, 27	Planning & Zoning Commission	7 p.m.	City Hall
	14	Sugar Land 101 application deadline		
	20	Citywide Neighborhood/HOA Representative Meeting	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
	29	"Boo Bash" Halloween Fun Night	5-9 p.m.	Sugar Land Community Center
	31	Senior Monster Mash	4-7 p.m.	Sugar Land Community Center

City of Sugar Land  
P. O. Box 110  
Sugar Land, TX 77487-0110



**City of Sugar Land offices  
will be closed Sept. 5  
for Labor Day. Regular  
solid waste collection will  
take place.**

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